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INCLUDING EKOMEDIA
BARCELONA

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Hunger Strike ..DAY 40. 'LET THEM DIE' SAYS STATE

The new hunger strike of 58 GRAPO prisoners and one anarchist (Pablo Serrano) began on 30th Nov. and goes on after 40 days with many prisoners in critical condition, at least 9 in hospital, a list of tortures and beatings, prisoners moved all over the State (dispersion), some in solitary with no letters rights, almost no media coverage and little public support.

ISOLATION

This time the State in effect called the strike..as soon as the general election was over they broke every clause of the signed agreement which had ended the previous hungerstrike only 4 weeks before. The agreement was 1) An end to solitary 2) A return to normal communal living arrangements (association). 3) A workshop and study room.

Grapo

The State has declared war on the GRAPO prisoners and is starting the same policies against the 500 ETA prisoners. GRAPO is the military wing of a marxist leninist party, PCE(r), inactive for years but who have killed several police and military during this latest strike (at least the press says it was them).

PRISON DEMO

On 17th Dec. about 200 people gathered in front of Soria Prison. They were mostly from the AFAPP (a prisoners group) and the CNT of Zaragoza. The police quickly appeared and dispersed the demo. On the way back to Zaragoza a CNT member was arrested for some hours when the cops discovered he was a totalrefuser of military service.

Squatted

On 22/12 a Red Cross office was occupied by the Ass. of Family and friends of political prisoners (AFAPP). They continue the occupation.

DISPERSION

At this point at least 28 have been moved to new prisons (not Pablo Serrano) and the repression gets fiercer, for instance the 4 in Daroca prison (Zaragoza) are in total isolation.



Pablo Serrano

A report of 3rd Jan says 24 are now in hospital and 54 still on hungerstrike. The prisoners in Soria issued a communique, of which the press printed a few words, ..they demanded.. reunification to be able to live in prison as persons with dignity, signed the Grapo prisoners and Pablo Serrano and they recalled the death on hunger strike of a comrade in '81.

Thats all the news we have.

FORCE FEEDING

DAY 44. Forcefeeding starts 30 in hospital. Seven Now 'pre-comatose'. 54 still on.

ISOLATION TORTURE DISPERSION

Anti-Mili News. All Free

After the drama and demos of the first Court Martials of the first two totalrefusers of conscription, Carlos Hinos and Josep Moragriga in Nov. not so much is happening.

An assembly of antimilitarists in Barcelona argued for 2 days before deciding to appeal, a delaying tactic as there aren't any legal grounds. So the cases against the over 300 other 'insumisos' are delayed.

Josep and Carlos agreed to abide by the decision of the anti militarist movement on whether to appeal the 13 month sentences they got from the military court.

ZARAGOZA

On 6th 12th a demo of 30 disrupted an official ceremony dedicating a new monument to the Sacred Constitution with a counter ceremony putting flowers in a helmet for all those imprisoned for refusing the military service.

BARCELONA

On 13/12 50 people tried to enter the Military Gov. HQ and when refused chained themselves round the door. The police cut the chains, no arrests. The next day their was a demo at one of the universities.

ALL FREE

At years end, despite a year of mass disobedience and illegal resistance to the mili, there were no known refusers or supporters in jail.

HUNGER STRIKE...DAY 40.

Repression of Political Prisoners.



by Pablo Serrano
anarchist prisoner in Soria Prison.

Pablo Serrano

LATE NEWS. 12th Jan. Supporters from CNT Zaragoza travelled to Soria prison before Pablo Serrano quit his hunger strike, but were refused entry

DATE 13/1/90

To understand the present offensive against the revolutionary prisoners it's necessary to examine the context which has produced it.

We should take into account the crisis in the economic system, which is forcing new ways of production and changes at all levels, including the political with an evolution towards neo-fascism under democratic forms; on the economic level with the accumulation and consequent concentration of power in fewer hands; on the social and cultural level through the elimination of every form of solidarity and promotion of selfish values, uniformity and behaviourism.... This whole process is causing imbalances at national, regional and local levels as well as enormous social costs, which create an ever more polarized society, both internally (Spain, ed.) and externally (North/South), with a continually increasing distance between both sides. This polarization is made worse by the constant decline of 'bridge sectors' (the petit bourgeoisie and the middle class).

Within this framework the struggle goes on for total economic control and the division of the 'cake' between the various countries of developed capitalism, to which we must add the tensions caused by the internationalization of capital. All this, along with the fact that the economic crisis is structural, that there's no clear way out (and more so when the indicators point to a world recession), shows us that despite the apparent strength of the system it's not based on solid ground.

It is this weakness of the system which makes it reinforce itself with stronger measures of control and domination, the struggle for economic hegemony which it's immersed in needs as few obstacles to the proposed plans as possible, thus the action of renewing, integrating or eliminating on the different levels everything which questions or holds it back. ... Also the disappearance of the welfare state leaves high and dry the revisionist policy of class collaboration, and this united with the growing polarization and dichotomy is producing enough of a social base for the development of insurrectional and revolutionary paths in the developed capitalist countries themselves.

Within this context it's clear that the offensive (i.e. the repressive attack on the prisoners, ed.) isn't something fixed or depend on negotiations and the rest, but is part of a wide repressive policy at a European level (the supra-nationalization of the state territory); this offensive follows the general lines defined by the group TREVI, modified for the special things to be fought in each State. So we see that the repression now being implemented is a realization of the failure of their previous repressive 'rehabilitation' policy (the dispersions, cuts, restrictions, ... beginning in '87). Also the proximity of '93, with the opening of the united European market obliges them to have everything well under control.

The result is the realization of the policy of liquidation, whose motto of EITHER YOU REPENT OR WE SUICIDE YOU is the outcome of all the above (the Prisons have had special reserve funds since the 2nd PSOE government). What this in practice means is the breaking of the most fundamental human rights, with dispersions, humiliating treatment, annoying searches, beatings, control, censure, opened and limited number of letters, isolation, ... in short torture in all its aspects. All of this is organized with the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior which has designed the plans, for 'heavies' and 'softies' (refers to division of the prisoners for possible 'rehabilitation', ed.) with all the baseness and vileness of sick minds, for example blackmailing terminally ill prisoners by offering release for signing their 'rehabilitation' documents, and receiving total support for their plans from the institutions, including all political parties, and of course put into practice by the prison warders, with the support of their union organizations (CCOO, UGT, communist and socialist, etc...) At the moment a crucial factor in this process is the role of the so-called Free Press, which informs on cases far away which interest the system, while like good mercenaries, they hide, silence, manipulate and dis-inform on ... what is happening in this State.



It's clear that this repressive situation is going to get worse, considering the process the system is going through, with little margin of time or for manoeuvre, to the extent that it has less and less to offer; especially the plans for hegemony, insofar as they produce a congruence (common interest) of wide sectors of repressed and exploited in the society; and if not, how is it possible that a strong system filthies itself like Torquemada - and this in the name of democracy - against just a few hundred 'iluminados' who are also prisoners, and who according to them lack social support?.

(note: translated from CNT magazine, Dec. 89. Any cuts in text are theirs not ours. 'ED' = translators note)

Muerte al Estado y Viva Anarquía

Fallece en Gijón la catalana Lola Iturbe, una de las creadoras de Mujeres Libres

□ GUILLERMINA PUIG / L'AVENÇ

el Periódico

Martes, 9 de enero de 1990

□ JAUME FABRE

■ Barcelona. — Lola Iturbe Arizcuren, una de las fundadoras de Mujeres Libres, falleció el 5 de enero en Gijón y fue enterrada en el cementerio del Nord de Barcelona, ciudad donde había nacido hacía 87 años. Lola Iturbe, que deja un libro editado en México, *La mujer en la lucha social*, fue una de las pioneras del movimiento feminista Mujeres Libres, nacido en 1934. Intentó en vano reeditar el libro en Barcelona, pero se decidió cuando ya declinaba el boom del libro político y de resistencia, y no logró su propósito.

Vino al mundo Lola Iturbe en la calle Riereta, del Raval, el año 1902, hija de madre soltera. Como ella misma explicaba en L'Avenç (junio de 1981), su madre "había tenido lo que llamaban entonces un desliz". No fue inscrita ni siquiera en el Registro Civil, y sólo en su vejez disponría de documentación. Como recordaría en esa misma entrevista, su inscripción legal fue posible gracias a un

carnet de corresponsal de guerra que le facilitó Joan García Oliver, del Comité de Milicias Antifeixistes, para que pudiera informar de la situación en el frente para el semanario Tierra y Libertad.

A los 16 años, Lola Iturbe había ingresado en el Sindicato del Vestido, que tenía su sede en la calle Nou de la Rambla. Así se introdujo en la CNT y en el movimiento libertario.

Un movimiento feminista

Mujeres Libres, el movimiento que contribuyó a impulsar, fue creado por Mercè Comaposada, Lucía Sánchez Saornil y Empar Poch, además de Lola Iturbe, que prestó a las tres pioneras el fichero de Tierra y Libertad, una de las revistas históricas del anarquismo español.

Mujeres libres se articuló como una especie de movimiento feminista *avant la lettre* gracias a la publicación de una revista que llevaba ese nombre. Ilustrada por Baltasar Lobo, contaba con cola-

boradoras tan interesantes como Etta Federn, experta en García Lorca, y la académica de la Lengua Carmen Conde.

El movimiento abrió también el Casal de la Dona Treballadora y los liberatorios de prostitución, que procuraban información a las mujeres que ejercían tal profesión.

Mujeres Libres llegó a tener una gran popularidad y, lo que es más importante, de 28.000 a 29.000 afiliadas. En Francia, Mercè Comaposada, superviviente del grupo fundador, recuperó la cabecera y sacó una publicación con ese nombre que se mantuvo durante años.

Lola Iturbe estaba casada con un militante destacado de la FAI, Juan Manuel Molina, *Juanel*, fallecido hace pocos años. Éste había sido detenido en 1946 cuando vivía clandestinamente en España como enviado de la CNT al interior desde el exilio. Pasó seis años en la cárcel y luego volvió a Francia. A la muerte de Franco, Lola Iturbe y su compañero volvieron a España y vivieron en la Verneda.



Lola Iturbe, en su piso de la Verneda.

MUJERES LIBRES

MORE NEXT ISSUE



1/6 Calle Unión 16,
Barcelona 08001.

Abortion struggle.

According to a statement issued by the Madrid Feminist Movement between 100,000 and 200,000 abortions are carried out every year in Spain on women with unwanted pregnancies. The group says that this is a consequence of the lack of information about sexual activity and contraception and unavailability of free contraception. The group calls for improvement in these areas and the right to free abortion based on the decision of the woman.

The present abortion law was passed four years ago and allows a woman to have an abortion on 3 grounds. These are in the case of rape, damage to the woman's health as a result of continuing with the pregnancy or deformation of the child. However even within this limited framework abortions are not carried out in the great majority of Spanish hospitals due to the great lack of clarity of the law and subsequent thin margin of legality which can result in prosecution of both women and doctors. Because of these doubts only 4% of legal abortions are carried out in state hospitals and most of these in two hospitals in the Madrid area. Doctors working in other regions of Spain have thrown in the towel because of the risk of ending up in the courts as occu-

ured with the Director and another doctor of a hospital in Pamplona

for performing legal abortions in 1987. These problems involved in the state health service has meant that 96% of legal abortions are carried out in private clinics, which charge between £150 and £500. In this way the government has managed to wash its hands of the issue by allowing the private clinics "to deal with the problem of abortion", with the result that women without the financial resources have to continue with unwanted pregnancies or risk an illegal "backstreet" abortion.

An abortion rights group has accused the Justice Minister, Enrique Mugica, of "insensitivity" with regard to the judicial uncertainty of women who have had legal abortions. The group says that recent cases have run over basic human rights because the present law limits to the extreme the right of women to voluntarily decide to terminate an unwanted pregnancy. Women who have had legal abortions have had their case histories passed on to judicial courts or have been cited to appear in court. The group calls for a law that gives women the right to choose and provides abortion through the state health system.

Sexual harassment

According to a report published by the UGT (Spain's largest union) 27% of working women suffered from some sort of physical sexual harassment at work in 1987. Separated, divorced and widowed women were found to have suffered most sexual harassment from male workers, both bosses and fellow staff, while, apparently, married women reported few incidents.

Although it will make little difference to men's attitudes towards the treatment of women at work, a Spanish court has set an historic precedent in Spanish labour law by recompensing a woman worker for wages lost while recovering from a sexual attack at work. The woman was accosted by a male worker, who attempted to rape her at a health centre in Ciudad Real. Tomas Ray caused physical and mental suffering to the woman which resulted in her absence from work for 26 months. The judgement of the court that her absence from work was due to "an accident at work" means that she will receive the full amount of her salary owing to her during this period. At an earlier hearing a judge had decided that because her physical injuries "only" took 13 days to recover from her aggressor would pay her the sum of 49,000 pesetas (about £250) in compensation, as the charge of attempted rape was not proved.

* Asociación Antipatriarcal: Al lado de los niños y de las niñas, nº 3, 150 pts. Apdo. 52018, 28080 MA-DRID

Trial Farce for 'Injuries to the King'

On 20th Nov the National Court in Madrid held the case against Javier Fabo (Txubi), a member of Eguski Irratia radio station, accused of injuring the King for which they asked for a seven year jail sentence. PIRATE RAIDED DURING ROYAL TOUR

On 7th Feb last year the Royals toured Navarra and the police occupied the old city of Pamplona, heavily attacking any attempt at protest. On the 9th the radio Eguski Irratia did a phone in about the visit, with lots of opinions for and against. The police attacked, seizing all the material and arresting Txubi.

On 20th Feb the pirate resumed broadcasting thanks to popular aid. 100,000 ptas was raised to get Txubi out on bail.

On 5th March 2000 supporters marched in Pamplona and 500 youths committed and admitted the same crime of insulting the king. The Coordination of Free Radios and the TAS TAS alternative news agency began campaigning against the coming trial of Txubi.

On 17th Nov another demo of 1000 in Pamplona and another done by Tas Tas and the pirate Hala Bedi Irratia in Vitoria (Gasteiz).

Two busloads of supporters went down to Madrid for the trial. They complained at the lack of solidarity from the various nationalist Euskadi organisations and the fact that only 25 supporters showed up from Madrid itself. The 150 demonstrators were surrounded by riot pigs, who tore down a banner written in euskera (Basque).

The farce was held on the 20th Nov, the prosecution blamed Txubi for all the phrases.. idiot.. buffoon.. wanker.. bastard.. or their equivalents in Spanish. The defence said he was only the introducer, couldn't be blamed for other's opinions, and challenged the state to prove the voice was his.

TXUBI GOES FREE On 29th Nov Txubi's lawyer was informed that he had won the case.

The case demonstrates 2 things.. that they're determined to enforce the



god like dignity of the king, and that the war against the free radios is hotting up. only a few such stations keep operating, mostly in Euskadi where they have enough support to resist attacks and threats.

Report translated from ANA and CNT (newspaper).

Radio Libertaria.

We've received a paper from Radio Libertaria in Valencia, giving details of their new daily schedule and attacking the fascist actions in the city.

A IDS

More than 7'500 prisoners in spanish jails are HIV positive. this from a survey of 80%, but not including Catalan prisons where we know the numbers are higher. More than 44.5% of those questionnaires had taken drugs by injection in prison,

Motorway

In the last issue we reported the controversy over the construction of a new motorway between ~~en~~ Navarre and Guipuzcoa in Euskadi. The proposed construction route would cause great ecological damage and an anti-motorway group has been supported by ETA, in its demand for a moratorium on construction to consider another route. It now appears that the authorities responsible for the motorway have done an about turn and met with the anti-motorway group in Madrid, on the

22nd November, in order to discuss the ~~latters~~ projected alternative route, which will be debated by the Guipuzcoa authorities. The deputy general of this province, Imanol Murua, said this was due ~~not~~ to pressure by ETA but was "a triumph for democracy" (The anti-motorway committee has stated that for this decision to have any real credibility the authorities must cease cutting down trees in the area!) Since ETA declared the motorway a "military objective" on the 2nd October, all contract technicians working on the project have been moved to other areas for fear of attacks. So on the 25th November the Diputacion de Guipuzcoa, put back by 2 months, approved of the project for "technical reasons".

madness

Kadter Taffait found dead in the street, syringe still in his arm— one of the 200 "ever-

year. Many die because of the strychnine and 'rat poison' used to dilute 'smack', which is given huge publicity in Spain and creates hysteria and hostility.

This gives the pigs an excuse to stop, search and harass people they disapprove of; of "clearing up the streets", for the '92 Olympics; plus, of murdering anyone they don't like, by deliberately injecting them with rat poison.



Fascists organise

Josu is dead

There have been a series of fascist attacks around Spain. Many thousands demonstrated in Madrid to mark the death of Franco. The next day all four deputies elected to represent the HB party (the political wing of ETA) were gunned down in a Madrid restaurant, causing the death of Josu Muguruza. Fascist demonstrators were on hand to celebrate, but the killing looks like a professional killing, with ex army issue guns (the police have financed and organised such killings in the past, see GAL reports)



SIGNAL SHOTS

The murder of Josu had a huge effect, causing mass demos (up to 100,000) in Euskadi and a lot of rioting and damage in almost every town and village. (see Tas Tas bulletins for details).

The killing has also been the signal for a general 'coming out' of the fascist movement, with attacks up and down the country.

Valencia

Several people were injured when 25 fascists entered the Plaza Carmen (which is an alternative center and a no-go area for them) beat up everyone in sight for 5 mins, then disappeared.

Even more serious in Sept a disco-bar opened by the CONS fascist 'union', its called the Lili Marlen and is decorated with Hess, Hitler and Primo de Rivera posters, etc. In the evenings they sing Nazi hymns.

BARCELONA ATTACKS

In Barcelona the A Center 'La Idea' was closed by Nazi attacks (see last iss.) On 24th Dec the squatters center of CROS 10 was again broken into, coinciding with meetings of fascist skins in the area, an amp., 4 guitars and other stuff was stolen. When a

gang of skins entered the Plaza Real in the city they were refused a drink and then attacked themselves and had to run for their lives in a hail of bottles and glasses. A youth had his face carved up by skins in Manresa.

They have had trouble with fascists in Zaragoza, with counter demos (cant find report). A report from FIJL (anarchist youth of Catalunya) urges people to fight back. In Lisbon, Portugal there was a demo of 200 on 5th Dec organised by local anarchists against facism, racism and skins.

On 4/11/89 five different fascist groups held a meeting in the Dept of Law of Madrid Uni (which is a regular refuge for such scum) to organise the defense of those nicked when they did a surprise attack, beating up journalists and Center Party politicians on the 1st day of the last election campaign. Without supporting the corrupt election circus we note that they use the same terror tactics against A's, punks, etc.

Mad cops mad cops

This month our mad cops column is full to busting. On 22/12 Inspector Serantes in Barcelona was freed for "lack of evidence" although other cops had caught him with cocaine and illegal arms. In his bank box po-LICE had also found documents about the unsolved murder of Basque leader Santi Brouard by fascists.

In another slightly embarrassing drug case the previous month a trafficker who tried to escape in a hail of bullets turned out to be a cop.

At the end of November in Barcelona the pigs-horses all got

sick and had to be confined to stables. On 20/12 over a 1000 cops marched thru' Barcelona asking for more money and disrupting the Xmas traffic, setting a deadline for 8/1 for claims to be settled.

A court in Huelva annulled a case, rejecting for "technical reasons", the trial of Roselló Ruiz, ex-Guardia Civil and ex-counsellor for the Partido Popular (fascist). He had been accused by his wife and 2 daughters of raping and drugging them repeatedly, in a shop he owned. Some justice!

Ex Cop Barracks

Squatted

Back in Barcelona, with the demise of the Villa Hortensia squat a very large empty cop barracks in excellent condition has been squatted. Thirty people are living there and setting up all kinds of workshops.

Mad cops mad cops mad cops

Anarchist Education Part One.

Life of Francisco Ferrer

1989 was the 80th anniversary of the State murder of Francisco Ferrer, the great educator, by firing squad in Barcelona, with the connivance of the Catholic Church. He's still controversial and the educative ideas still very relevant (if more against state than church control today). In Sept '89 the nationalist and fascist sections of Barcelona Council united (for once) to prohibit a memorial to Francisco Ferrer i Guardia. On 13th Oct., the anniversary, anarchists from the CNT union, held meetings about Ferrer and re-named a Plaza after him, which had been Pl. Ferrer in '36-'39. Now named after bishop,

Francisco Ferrer y Guardia was born on 10th January 1859, on a farm near Barcelona. His parents were devout Catholics, one of his uncles was a free-thinker and his first employer was militantly atheist, so Ferrer acquired from these an independent character and strong anti-clerical views. By 1883 he was a free-mason and radical Republican, a follower of Manuel Ruiz Zorrilla, who was living in exile in Paris. Ferrer, who was a conductor on the Barcelona-French frontier trains, acted as a courier for Ruiz and helped many political refugees find sanctuary in France in 1885.

Ferrer, his wife and their three children, lived in Paris. He worked as a Spanish teacher and earned commission on selling wine, as well as being Ruiz's unpaid secretary until the latter's death in 1895. Ferrer supported Dreyfus, was a delegate to the Congress of the Second International in 1896 held in London, was active in "rationalist" circles, as well as attending the International Free Thought Congress in Prague in 1897. After the death of Ruiz, Ferrer moved gradually from Republicanism to Anarchism, reading the literature, frequenting the Anarchist clubs, and meeting such famous anarchists as Louise Michel, Jean Grave, Elisée Reclus, Sébastien Faure, Charles Malato, and the exiled Spanish anarchists Anselmo Lorenzo and Fernando Tarrida de Mírmol. Impressed by the personal qualities of the anarchists and fascinated by their ideas Ferrer finally regarded himself as their comrade and by the end of the 1890's

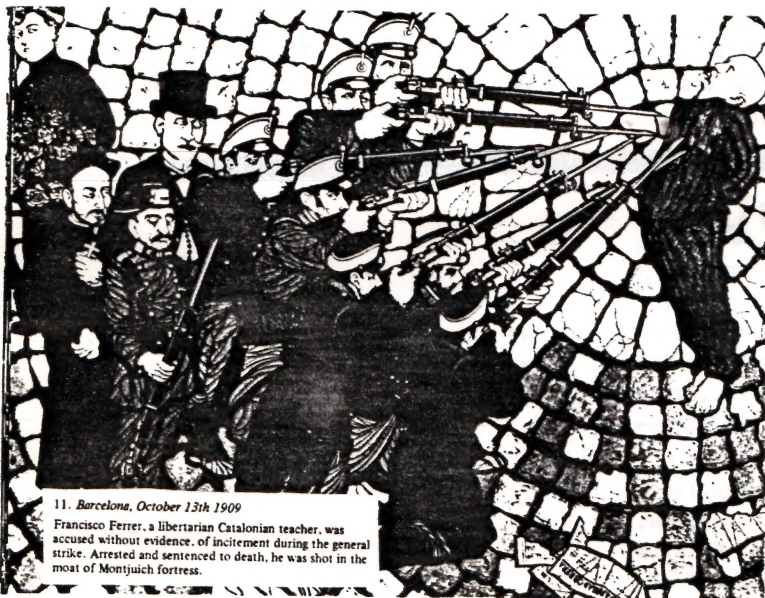
bourgeois and libertarian education. The first school which was used as a model for Ferrer's own Escuela Moderna, as well as an inspiration for Anarchists and Rationalists, was Paul Robin's school at Cempuis near Paris. Robin was appointed director of Cempuis in December 1880. The principles of the school were those based on integral education: students were both boys and girls, whose physical and intellectual capacities could develop in a noncoercive atmosphere. In 1894, however, due to continual criticisms from secular and religious conservatives Robin was dismissed from his post because of his "unconventional" methods and his radical activities, such as being a pioneer of the birth-control movement in France.

In 1897 a League for Libertarian Education was formed to continue Robin's work. It was supported by Jean Grave, Louise Michel, Elisée Reclus, Peter Kropotkin and Leo Tolstoy. In the schools, Arts and Sciences would be studied at the same time, but in a practical manner; visits to zoological gardens and excursions to the countryside to see nature at first hand, even before a person could read were planned. Tolstoy wrote: "...and after forty years I am more convinced that only by education, free education, can we ever manage to rid ourselves of the existing horrible order of things and to replace it with a rational organisation." Unfortunately, due to lack of funds the school only opened for one summer, but in March 1900 Ferrer received an inheritance of almost a million francs from a former student, a Mlle Meurie. Although she was from a conventional background she eventually accepted the ideas and methods which Ferrer advocated, and she willingly devoted her money to the cause of libertarian education. This money gave Ferrer the opportunity to return to Barcelona and set up a Modern School there.

The Return to Barcelona.

Ferrer returned to Spain in 1901 during a time of political and social unrest, due to Spain's defeat by the United States and its almost total loss of its empire. There was intense criticism of Spanish social life, particularly of its educational system at this time. Everybody agreed that the system needed changing. Two-thirds of the Spanish population were unable to read or write; only 15,000 of the nation's 45,000 towns had a public school; and most schools were totally inadequate because of the lack of materials and bad teachers. In the church schools, the church controlled them, chose the teachers and the curriculum. When Ferrer was at school 25 years before three-quarters of the time was spent on religious instruction, prayer, canticles and the catechism, discipline was severe and physical punishment common. Very little had changed in a quarter of a century.

In the 1890's there were radical changes against the old feudal Spanish ways in industry, education and government. A secularist educational movement also grew at this time with an emphasis on science,



11. Barcelona, October 13th 1909

Francisco Ferrer, a libertarian Catalan teacher, was accused without evidence, of incitement during the general strike. Arrested and sentenced to death, he was shot in the moat of Montjuich fortress.

arrived at a philosophy of "...the sovereignty of the individual, free from institutional restraints."

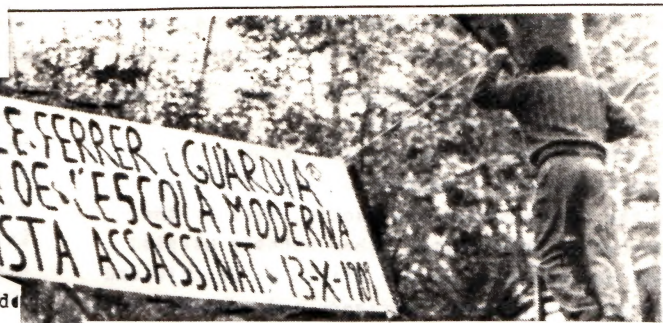
Ferrer, as a teacher, was obviously interested in education. During this time in Anarchist and Rationalist circles the subject of education was discussed and written about intensely. Jean Grave in a widely read pamphlet entitled Enseignement bourgeois et enseignement libaire (Paris 1900) made the distinction between

Anarchists change name of Barcelona Plaza.Oct. 13th, '89.

history and sociology. In these critical debates Ferrer was at the forefront and was following in the European tradition of education for everybody. In



PLAZA DE E. FERRER
FUNDADOR DE LA ESCUELA MODERNA
ANARQUISTA ASSASSINAT - 13-X-1901



Spain there had been earlier attempts Elias Puig in Catalonia and Jose Sanchez Rosa in Andalucia to provide secular schools for working people. This tradition dating from 18th Century rationalism and 19th Century romanticism changed the emphasis on instruction ("teaching") to the process of learning, from teaching by rote and memorization, to teaching by example and experience from education as a preparation for life to education as life itself. Its motto was "freedom in education", and it rejected totally the formality and discipline of the conventional classroom, the restrictions and regulations that suppressed individual development and divided education from play. It cultivated physical as well as mental development, crafts and arts as well as books. Hostile to dogma and superstition, it chose reason, observation and science

as well as independence, autonomy and self-reliance. Antiauthoritarian and antiauthoritarian, it stressed the dignity and rights of the child, encouraging warmth, love and affection in place of conformity and regimentation. Among its key words were: freedom, spontaneity, creativity, individuality and self-realization.

This tradition proposed the free school- free from religious and political domination, free from authority of any sort. For Ferrer and his predecessors the church was the greatest obstacle to public enlightenment. As Bakunin declared, education "...must be founded wholly upon the scientific development of reason and not upon faith; upon the development of personal dignity and independence, not upon piety and obedience; upon the cult of truth and justice at any cost; and above all, upon respect for humanity which must replace in everything the divine cult." Schools, Bakunin added, must be rid of "...this fiction of God, the eternal absolute enslaver." State education was also entirely rejected, for both church and state seek to keep out new ideas that might undermine the status quo. Ferrer wrote, "rulers have always taken care to control the education of the peoplethey know better than anyone else that their power is based almost entirely on the school, and they therefore insist on retaining their monopoly on it." For Ferrer the school was "an instrument of domination in the hands of the ruling class." The government used the schools to produce loyal citizens; the church, faithful parishioners; the manufacturers obedient workers.

"Freedom in education" meant freedom from the authority of the teachers as well as the church and state. Under present conditions, Ferrer stated, the teacher was merely an agent of the ruling classes, training people "to obey, to believe, to think according to the social dogmas which govern us". Like the soldier and the policeman, he was "always imposing, compelling and using violence; the true educator is the man (sic!) who does not impose his own ideas and will on the child, but appeals to its own energies". Reacting against the (army) barracks tradition of drilling lessons into students through a combination of repetition and punishment, which only destroys the imagination and inhibits the natural development of people, education is seen as a spontaneous, creative process.

The first school he opened was in Calle de las Cortes with twelve girl and eighteen boy students on the 8th September 1901. It had three levels of learning primary, intermediate, and advanced, as well as a workshop, laboratory, maps, charts and other teaching aids. There

were no exams as well. A fee was charged for tuition, but only on sliding-scale according to the income of each family, which was a mixture of middle- and working-class people. Children and their parents participated in the administration of the school, and parents were also encouraged to come to evening and Sunday afternoon lectures given by noted scholars on a variety of topics

These lectures were open to all, and became very popular especially with workers, to such an extent that by the second year they took place every evening and, finally, led Ferrer to discuss with professors at Barcelona University the possibility of creating a popular university, in conjunction with the Escuela Moderna.

A radical publishing house was also established in the same building, with a staff of translators and printers, along with internationally eminent authors writing books in a way that everybody could understand. Fourty of these books were published dealing with mathematics to natural and social sciences, as well as religion and "...the injustices connected with patriotism, the horrors of war, and the iniquity of conquest." The anarchist Charles Malato wrote a book called Social Classes, Leon Martin Fevery: Its Cause and Cure, and one of the most popular of the children's books was written by Jean Grave, The Adventures of Nene, which was a utopian fairy tale. A variety of educational materials was also published, along with the Boletin de la Escuela Moderna, the official publication of the school with regular contributions by Ferrer, Tolstoy, Kropotkin and Robin.

In the classes the students were taught the ideas of liberty, equality and social justice of the value of cooperation and sympathy for the repressed and down-trodden. War was taught as a crime against humanity, capitalism as a system of evil, that government is slavery and that freedom is essential for human development. The textbooks used were Kropotkin's Anarchist Morality, Charles Malato's War, Jean Grave's A Free World and Amelmo Lorenzo's The Feast of Life, all heavily anti-capitalist, antistatist and antimilitarist. Examples used in class were about patriotism, superstition and exploitation, and the suffering they produce; and, extracts from students essays along these lines were regularly published in the Boletin.

The basic, if not the sole idea of the school was to encourage the development of free, independently minded individuals, who would not tolerate any injustices of any sort, and who would actively oppose such injustices. Such individuals cooperating together would be the foundation of a new (Anarchist) society. In keeping with

This Ferrer devoted a lot of energy to organizing a revolutionary labour movement in Catalonia using the methods of direct action (Anarche-Syndicalism) and, between 1901 and 1903, he published a syndicalist journal La Huelga General (The General Strike), which was eventually suppressed by the government.

In October 1905 another branch of the Escuela Moderna was opened in Villanueva y Gettrú, a nearby textile centre, and the inauguration was decided over by the rector of Barcelona University. Other schools adopted his textbooks and methods, as far afield as Sevilla and Córdoba, but also in Málaga, Tarragona and smaller

NOTES:

- 1) J. Martel, "Ferrer's Experimental School as a symbol of Modern Progressive Educational Movement", Ph.D. diss., N.Y. Univ., 1933, p. 51, cited in P. Avrich, The Modern School Movement: Anarchism and Education in the United States page 4, Princeton Univ. Press 1980.
- 2) Leo Tolstoy in Les Temps Nouveaux, September 11-17, 1897.

villages. By the end of 1905 there were 14 such schools in Barcelona, and 34 in Catalonia, Valencia and Andalusia. He also helped radical Republicans to organize classes in their ateneas ("centres") providing them with textbooks and other materials. The secular schools created by the League of Freethinkers also used his materials, of which there were 120 such schools in Barcelona province by early 1906. On Good Friday, 12th April 1906, Ferrer along with 1,700 children marched in demonstration for secular education before having a picnic.

NEXT ISSUE: Closure, the "Tragic Week" and Martyrdom.

- and M.P. Smith The Libertarians and Education, Unwin Bks., 1983.
- 7) Quoted in P. Avrich, ibid., p. 23.
- 8) There is a long and fairly sympathetic article about Jean Grave by L. Patsouras, in The Crucible of Socialism, Humanities Press, 1987. (Plus other articles on Anarchism).

Olympic Fascism.

3000 volunteers screamed with joy as the mayor, Pascal Maragall, handed over an olympic flag to symbolically inaugurate olympic volunteer training courses. There are 7,700 such olympic volunteers in this Hospitalet suburb alone, and over 100,000 in all Barcelona. 560 million ptas are being invested in a baseball pitch in the suburb.

The other side of the olympic story is clear from the report of the battle of a gypsy family with 5 kids against forced police eviction to make way for an olympic project. The family threw all their furniture and belongings out of the windows of the flat in Carrer Tortosa and the police failed several times to break in, eventually getting the fire brigade and breaking in through the roof. A man Juan Santiago and 14 yr old Juan Antonio were arrested and held. According to the council the gypsies were squatters.

STRIKES

There have been mass strikes of the orange pickers which were eventually settled after lots of occupations, blocked roads and sabotage.

Lorry drivers blocked border crossing points for several days to protest their wages and conditions.

A series of one and 2 day strikes has almost closed down the rail network over the xmas period.

In Asturias there was a general strike followed by a miners strike to protest against the continual deaths of workers in "accidents".

CNT

The 7th Congress of the CNT will be held in Bilbao from the 11th to the 16th of April 1990

CNT NOTES the 3 people detained and beaten in Granada during one of the actions to claim the property confiscated by the fascist gov. have begun a court case against the police. The CNT lost a court case they'd taken claiming the institutional campaign for the union committee elections broke their constitutional rights. The CNT and UGT unions are now working together to claim property jointly owned under Franco, and other issues.



News in Brief

BARCELONA - 13/12/89

Forty total objectors against military service chained themselves to the Military Government HQ in protest at the 'selective repression' of the objectors' movement (eg sending scapegoats to jail and forgetting the rest). Military judge Ricardo Izquierdo, responsible for recent anti-objector trials, refused to meet them.

CARABANHEL - non-party Catalan independentist Núria Cadenas has spent nearly 450 days in this notorious women's prison, without so much as a glimmering of a trial on the horizon.

Núria was arrested on 9/9/88

under anti-terrorist legislation suspected of intention to cause



explosions and membership of Terra Lliure (independentist urban guerillas). She has been

beaten, is allowed only one hour visit a week, (family only), packets are confiscated, and, of course, spoken Catalan. She has not yet been formally charged with anything. She is the founder of an independentist pressure group (Maulets), and was an active member of the 1988 student strikes in Barcelona.

BARCELONA - 12/89 - On the best seller lists here at the moment is I Tu Qui Ets? (Who Are You Then?) by Xavier Benguerel, a novel dealing sympathetically with the AT of 1936, by the son of one of its affiliates.

.AntiNukeNotes

There have been lots more demos against nuclear power after the serious accident at Vandellós 1 (see last issue). Even the Catalan parliament came out against it, but when the big demos had eventually tailed off, the president of Catalunya, Jordi Pujol, came out in favour of reviving Vandellós 1. Not surprising as more than half Catalunya's lekky comes from nukes. The demos peaked with one of 40,000 in Barcelona on 26th Nov.

NUCLEAR CEMETERY work has begun on the extension of the nuke cemetery at Bl Cabril. They're spending 6,000 million ptas to enlarge its capacity from 15,000 to 250,000 barrels.